

Capital Springs Centennial State Park and Recreation Area Master Plan

Planning for CSCSPRA is moving along and will be in high gear this spring and summer. Phase 1, information gathering and mapping of park resources, is complete and we are in Phase II, creating a vision statement and goals for Capital Springs. We want your input on the "vision", what CSCSPRA will look like and offer when it is complete. Please see the article about Vision and Goals on page 2. In Phase III, we will actually start to design the park. We invite you to give us your ideas at the Public Design Workshop on May 29. The final plan will require Dane County Board and DNR Board approval. Read on and see how you can participate in shaping CSCSPRA for the future!



Public Design Workshop

Have you ever wanted to be a park planner? Here is your chance! A public design workshop for CSCSPRA will be held May 29th, 6:30 pm, at the Lussier Family Heritage Center in Lake Farm Park.

Jennings & Associates Landscape Architecture, Master Plan consultants, will lead the workshop. Everyone will have the opportunity to draw plans for Capital Springs themselves. Bring your kids, they have great ideas! Don't worry, no experience is necessary!!

The evening will begin with a short presentation about the background inventory maps and discussion about the facilities and activities that the public has requested and that are suitable for the park. Then we will break into small groups to develop actual designs using large maps of the park and colored markers.

We have found that people who are interested in the park often know the place well and have very good ideas. By working in small groups, you will have the opportunity meet and learn from others who also want to be involved in the park. Each small group will create a design and then present their ideas to the whole group.

The ideas developed during this session will be used by the consultants to create two alternative plans for each, the State Park and the Recreation Area. The options will be presented at a public meeting in August. After the public and the governmental partners comment on the options, one draft Master Plan map will be drawn for each the State Park and Recreation Area.

The public will be able to review this plan in November and the Dane County Parks Commission and the WDNR will review the draft for comment and potential approval.

If you would like to see background information and maps for Capital Springs, check out the Capital Springs website at www.dnr.state.wi.us/master_planning and click on Capital Springs. Hope to see you on May 29th!

Dane County Notes

One of the things that makes Capital Springs so unique, besides the views of Lake Waubesa, the miles of trails, and being a 3000 acre park within an urban area, is that Dane County and the WDNR are jointly managing this park.

This is the first time such an arrangement has been tried in Wisconsin. The two entities agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that established Capital Springs and outlined the duties and responsibilities of each. Dane County and the WDNR are currently working on management and operations plans for Capital Springs. The Dane County Parks Commission and the Dane County Board, as well as the DNR Board, must approve the final Master Plan.

The Dane County Park Commission received their first full briefing on the Capital Springs Centennial State Park and Recreation Area Master Plan Process at their regular meeting on April 2nd. The Commission offered their insight and comments both on the planning process and the draft vision statement.

William Lunney, Park Commission Chair, expressed the county's pride in what already has been accomplished by the Park System and the citizen of the county. The Commission was appreciative of the opportunity to participate in the planning process, which will further enhance the county's accomplishments in Nine Springs E-Way and Lake Farm County Park. Natural and cultural heritage should be a focus of the plan, according to the Commission discussion.

It was agreed by all who attended the meeting that partnering with the state provides a unique opportunity for the future. The Commission looks forward to taking an active role as a participant at future guidance team meetings with the DNR and County staff.

Draft Vision and Goals

Over the past few weeks representatives from Dane County Parks and the DNR have been grappling with ideas for a vision statement for the park. The vision statement should express how unique Capital Springs is and what it will offer to the public.

The Dane County Parks Commission, all of the governmental partners, such as the cities, villages, and towns that own land within the project boundaries, other partners such as MMSD, and DNR guidance boards have all had an opportunity to comment on several proposed "vision statements". Now it is the public's turn to let the planners know if the draft vision statement reflects the opportunities the park has to offer.

Proposed Vision Statement:

Dane County, the WDNR, and their partners hold the following vision for the future of Capital Springs Centennial State Park and Recreation Area: Capital Springs, on the edge of urban Madison, is a place where we embrace heritage, education, nature, and recreation. Visitors to the park enjoy a rich system of marshes, springs, creeks, and lakes that recharge our waters and ourselves. They find a healthy place for outdoor learning, recreation, solitude, and reflection. The Heritage Center continues to be focal point where visitors learn about Native American culture, local settlement patterns, and natural systems. This recreation corridor is a key link in the statewide trail system connecting neighborhoods, Madison, and other parts of Wisconsin.

Proposed Goals

To complement the vision statement, goals are developed for the primary elements within the park. The goals listed below cover the historical, natural and recreational opportunities that the public told us were important to consider while planning the park. The goals are quite broad and general at this point and will become more specific as the process moves forward. In Phase 4 (during 2004), Dane County Parks and the DNR will develop very specific objectives or actions for each goal. The following broad goals are proposed:

- Support and expand the cultural, historical, and educational efforts that have been initiated by the Heritage Center, Lake Farm Park Archaeological District, and the historic Nevin Fish Hatchery.
- Provide a variety of cultural, environmental, and outdoor educational opportunities and experiences for all ages and abilities.
- Preserve, protect, manage, and enhance water resources, plant communities, wildlife, and threatened and endangered species.
- Provide a range of low-impact, nature-based land and water recreation activities in environmentally suitable locations.
- Provide trail access from adjoining neighborhoods for recreation and commuting; maintain and enhance connections to the regional land and water trail networks.

Family Fun at the Heritage Center!

A family and community day of fun and education is coming up in September at the Lussier Family Heritage Center at Lake Farm Park! Proceeds will be used to purchase natural and cultural exhibits for the Heritage Center. More details will be available in our next newsletter or call Linda Mitnacht at 608-224-3604.

Please take a few minutes to give us your thoughts on the proposed Vision and Goals Statements. Is this how you see the park? Are the most important aspects of the park considered or are we missing something? Please let us know what you think! Your comments will go to the Dane County Parks Commission, DNR staff, and the consultants. After a review of the public comments, the Vision and Goal Statements will be finalized.

Friends Group Formed

A new Friends Group is currently being formed to support the Capital Springs Centennial State Park & Recreation Area (CSCSPRA) and the Capital City State Trail (CCST).

The Friends of Wisconsin State Parks recently co-hosted a very successful fund-raiser in Madison to help raise community support for this new group. The Friends of CSCSPRA and CCST will help tap the unlimited potential of a unique partnership between Wisconsin State Parks, Dane County Parks, and local communities.

It will provide services and support to the park, recreation area, and trail through potential projects such as grassland restoration, trail maintenance and signage, education and interpretation, community events and fund-raisers, and property improvements. This Friends Group will benefit from both the natural and local community resources found in and around the park, recreation area, and trail.

You can support the Friends Group Program by becoming a member of the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks or by joining the new Friends of CSCSPRA and CCST as a volunteer member. The Friends are also looking for volunteers to serve on their board of directors as a member or officer. You can also help by joining a committee to help the Friends Group meet its organizational goals and overall mission.

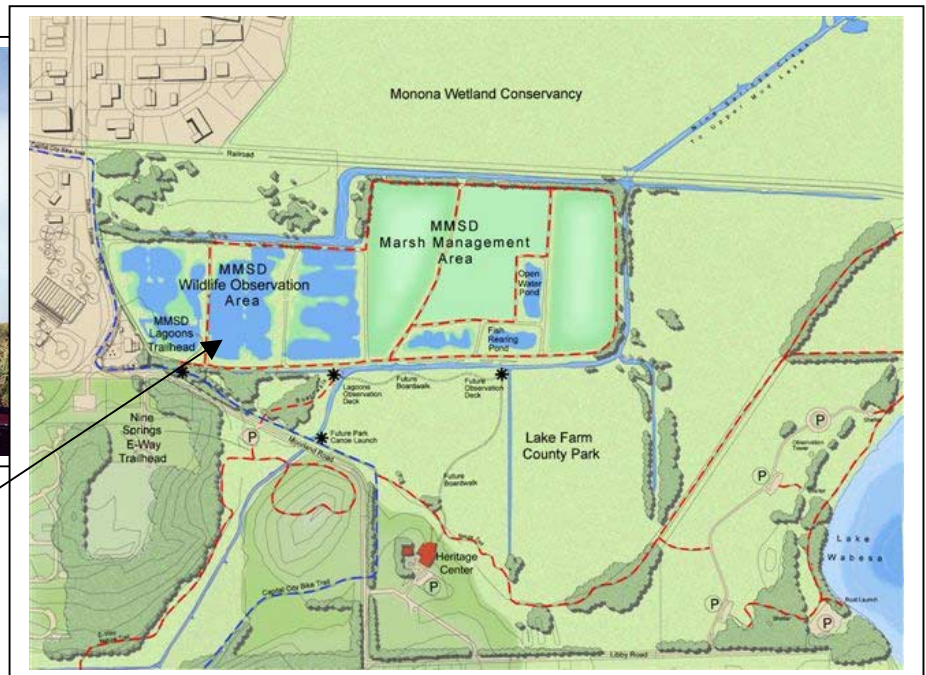
For more information on the Friends Group Program, please contact Camille Zanoni, State Friends Group Coordinator with Wisconsin State Parks at 608-266-7617, e-mail camille.zanoni@dnr.state.wi.us.

You can also visit the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks Web site at www.wistateparksfriends.org.

The eastern zone contains a combination of open water and wetland that attracts marsh birds and water birds. The creek and drainage canals that border the eastern zone are attractive to wood ducks and other waterfowl.



This Wildlife Observation Area viewing platform, is accessible from the E-Way parking lot on Mooreland Road.



Partner Profile

Spring is a great time of year for bird watching! A great place in Capital Springs to observe birds is the Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District Wildlife Observation Area. Just a few years ago the observation area was a storage lagoon for biosolids that were produced at the Nine Springs Wastewater Treatment Plant. The biosolids have been removed and the area has been reconstructed for wildlife habitat and recreation. Bird watchers have always enjoyed this area and the MMSD hopes that the reconstruction will provide even better viewing for naturalists.

In the western part of the observation area, water levels are managed to provide excellent conditions for migratory shorebirds. During the spring and fall migratory seasons, water is pumped out of the ponds and returned to the wastewater treatment plant. This exposes the mudflats and thier abundant food supply. Water levels are raised after each migration period to control weed growth. Highly treated effluent produced at the Nine Springs Wastewater Treatment Plant is used as the source water.

Over 200 different species of birds have been documented at the site, including pheasants, hawks, owls, songbirds and shorebirds, some of which are rare in this part of the country. The area is also home to deer, fox, raccoon, muskrats, turtles, and other animals.

The public is invited to walk the trails and the boardwalk, but is asked not to bring pets into the area or to engage in activities that would disturb the habitat or wildlife. To learn more about MMSD call 608-222-1201 or visit www.madsewer.org. Tours of the treatment plant are available upon request and can be arranged online or by calling the above number.

Jennings and Associates Landscape Architecture
3112 West Highland Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53208

WEB PAGE www.dnr.state.wi.us/master_planning and look for Capital Springs Centennial State Park

DANE COUNTY PARKS DEPARTMENT

Ken LePine, Director lepine@co.dane.wi.us
Chris James, Park Planner james@co.dane.wi.us
4318 Robertson Rd.
Madison, WI 53714
608 242-4586

WISCONSIN DNR

Dana White-Quam, Project Leader Dana.White-Quam@dnr.state.wi.us
Michele Chalice, Senior Planner Michele.Chalice@dnr.state.wi.us
3911 Fish Hatchery Rd.
Fitchburg, WI 53711
608 275-3302

STATE PARK MANAGER

Brad Bates Brad.Bates@dnr.state.wi.us
Lussier Family Heritage Center at Lake Farm Park
608-224-3606

JENNINGS & ASSOCIATES LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Tom Jennings, Consultant Project Manager jennings@execpc.com
Margaret Burlingham, Consultant Park Planner tburling@idcnet.com
3112 W. Highland Blvd.
Milwaukee, WI 53208
414-431-0800

